

**Questions and Answers about *Fast Forward*,
Indiana's Reform Plan
Updated 3/16/2010**

General RttT questions

Since Indiana was not chosen as a finalist in Phase I of Race to the Top, will IDOE continue with the educational reforms within the plan? (Updated 3/16/10)

IDOE will continue implementing *Fast Forward*, as it the roadmap for Indiana's educational reform. The RttT competition catches Indiana mid-stride in bold education reform efforts that align entirely with the grant's criteria. As a result, success in RttT will not dictate the trajectory of education reform in Indiana. Importantly, however, securing funding through RttT would have exponentially increased the tempo of change for Hoosier students. This is why Indiana's RttT reform agenda is the "***Fast Forward***" plan - because RttT would have enabled Indiana to accelerate the reforms it has started and which are so necessary to markedly improve student outcomes, close gaps in student achievement and make other key gains. IDOE will move forward aggressively and continue doing what is in the best interest of Indiana students.

Will Indiana apply for Phase II of Race to the Top? (Updated 3/16/10)

This will be dependent upon the comments IDOE receives from the Phase I reviewers.

What can administrators do to prepare for Fast Forward reforms? (Updated 3/16/10)

Administrators can read Indiana's *Fast Forward* plan and start identifying ways to implement the reforms.

How many states will receive funding from RttT? (Update 3/16/10)

The United States Department of Education has not indicated how many states will win funding from Race to the Top.

How much control will districts have over number of days per school year and number of hours in the school day?

A district will have the same flexibility it has now, once it meets the minimum days and hours required by state law.

What are the considerations for special education? (Updated 3/16/10)

Indiana's *Fast Forward* plan does not directly address special education.

Will state statutes change if they are in conflict with Fast Forward, or will there be changes in the federal law that override state law and collective bargaining agreements?

Most reforms contained in *Fast Forward* can be made without any statutory changes. Where a change in statute or administrative rule would be necessary to accomplish reform, that fact has been noted in the *Fast Forward* plan.

How will the community be involved in the Fast Forward reforms?

LEAs will have the flexibility to involve members of the community in any way they see fit.

How will the selection of textbooks be affected by the standards/testing being created for subjects such as foreign languages?

This is not addressed directly in the *Fast Forward* plan.

How soon does IDOE expect to see the Fast Forward mandates and areas of focus becoming a requirement for all schools? (Updated 3/16/10)

IDOE has not been provided any specific information on this topic, but the President indicated in his State of the Union address that the federal government intends to pursue ESEA reauthorization that is based on the reform criteria in RttT. Indiana will continue with its reforms laid out in *Fast Forward* and will engage all schools in participating.

Does an LEA currently implementing reforms stated in Fast Forward (i.e. teacher evaluations, turnaround models) need to stop the current reforms or change them in order to meet Fast Forward qualifications?

Where reforms are currently being implemented, IDOE will work with the participating LEA during the work plan stage to integrate those reforms with *Fast Forward*.

Funding

When Title I is reauthorized this year, will it mirror RttT?

President Obama has implied Title I reauthorization will mirror RttT.

Details of Fast Forward

Section B: Standards and Assessments

What does the growth model look like, must it include ISTEP+, and is there a website with information discussing the growth model? (Updated 2/25/10)

Information on the growth model can be found at <http://www.doe.in.gov/growthmodel>. The early phase of the growth model can be viewed on the Learning Connection (LC). For information on the LC, please visit <https://learningconnection.doe.in.gov/Login.aspx?ret=/default.aspx>.

When will final standards be released? (Updated 3/16/10)

The final Common Core standards were released on March 10, 2010. For more information on the standards, please visit <http://www.corestandards.org/>.

Section C: Data Systems to Support Instruction

Data systems will send confidential student data. Is this allowed under FERPA?

The IDOE will develop data systems to comply with FERPA and all other applicable laws.

Will the longitudinal data system be a single system?

The entire longitudinal data system will rely on vertical interoperability between and among the IDOE system and local systems.

Section D: Great Teachers and Leaders

Will the state mandate the evaluation tool for teachers? (Updated 3/16/10)

For a detailed description of the plans for teacher and principal evaluation, please refer to Section D of Indiana's *Fast Forward* plan. The plan is available at <http://www.doe.in.gov/fastforward>.

What is IDOE's definition of effective teachers and will this definition consider certain components of curriculum and/or teaching styles? (Updated 3/16/10)

For a detailed description of the plans for teacher and principal evaluation, please refer to Section D of Indiana's *Fast Forward* plan. The plan is available at <http://www.doe.in.gov/fastforward>.

Will principals' pay be based on how well teachers do their jobs and will superintendents' pay be based on how well each principal does his/her job? (Updated 3/16/10)

For a detailed description of the plans for teacher and principal evaluation, please refer to Section D of Indiana's *Fast Forward* plan. The plan is available at <http://www.doe.in.gov/fastforward>. In addition to information about an evaluation framework, the plan provides a chart listing possible compensation levels.

How will teachers in subjects and grade levels be evaluated if their subjects/grade levels do not have standardized tests? (Updated 3/16/10)

For a detailed description of the plans for teacher and principal evaluation, please refer to Section D of Indiana's *Fast Forward* plan. The plan is available at <http://www.doe.in.gov/fastforward>.

If an LEA reaches agreement on a new evaluation plan or merit pay system, will it be approved by IDOE? (Updated 3/16/10)

Yes, as long as it fits within the framework established within Indiana's *Fast Forward* plan.

What student data would be used for non-core teacher evaluations to meet the 51% requirement?

IDOE endeavors to establish a program to accurately evaluate and regard effective teachers and school leaders through a comprehensive data-driven performance management system. These questions will be addressed in detail as we work with teachers and principals to establish this system.

Will IDOE establish pre and post testing for all courses taught in Indiana schools? (Updated 2/25/10)

The next phases of the growth model are in development now, and these questions will be addressed during the development. For more information on the growth model, please visit <http://www.doe.in.gov/growthmodel>.

May local and/or formative assessments be included in the 51% of the evaluation that must be based on student growth? (Updated 3/16/10)

Yes, if the assessment meets the criteria listed in *Fast Forward*.

Section E: Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

How was the bottom 5% determined?

Schools that have remained in the lowest category of PL 221 rankings for four consecutive years (i.e. schools subject to visits by state turnaround teams) were automatically included. High schools with a three-year, non-waiver graduation rate of less than 60% were also automatically included. The remainder were included via a combination of three factors: 1) A three-year average of the percentage of students passing the Graduation Qualifying Examination; 2) A three-year average of a school's non-waiver graduation rate; 3) The combined percentage passing rate of students on the ELA and math ISTEP (i.e. 200 percentage points possible).

Will districts be at liberty to choose the turnaround model appropriate for their situation or will it be determined by IDOE?

IDOE will work with struggling schools to implement one of the four intervention models outlined by the USDOE.

Can a school be added to the bottom 5% list, and how often will the list be updated?

The list may be revisited when new data becomes available.

Will schools on the bottom 5% list be required to choose one of the turnaround models set forth in Fast Forward? (Updated 3/16/10)

Implementation of one of the four intervention models is not strictly dependent on participation in *Fast Forward*.